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ABSTRACT

After needs assessments were conducted in six Florida school districts, strategies were developed for implementing creative and relevant workshops emphasizing curricular innovations and individualized instruction. Procedures and techniques evolved from 50 workshops given to 1500 elementary school teachers. Among the activities were: multimedia presentations, self awareness demonstrations, brainstorming techniques, and learning center tours. Reactions to the workshops were highly favorable, with positive ratings for the instructor a major component of participant satisfaction. (PG)

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AN EFFECTIVE MODEL OF IN-SERVICE WORKSHOPS
FOR ELEMENTARY TEACHERS

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AN EFFECTIVE MODEL OF IN-SERVICE WORKSHOPS FOR ELEMENTARY TEACHERS

Problem

Throughout the country Colleges of Education must become active participants in developing meaningful teacher in-service programs. These programs are necessary in order to create and facilitate better liason with the community being served. The very survival of educational faculties may depend on their ability to develop and implement new and meaningful in-service programs. A sincere commitment is needed by College of Education faculties to increase and enhance their effectiveness in meeting the needs of the school communities they serve.

With the advent of the Teacher Center Act of 1974 the Florida State Legislature provided the means for each county school district to take over and implement in-service programs for their teachers. However, without the immediate and innovative changes by the College of Education faculty, the roles of the colleges as an educational force in the community will be diluted.

According to the Florida Teacher Center Act, "Such teacher training programs should be funded through annual appropriations in the Florida Education Finance Program to each school district at the rate of \$5.00 per FTE (full-time equivalency) per student in each district or such higher rate as may be established annually by the legislature. Funds appropriated to school districts pursuant to this section shall be used exclusively for in-service personnel training programs meeting criteria established by the Department of Education

for in-service master plans. This act should take effect July 1, 1974."

CSHB 369-5

A second important factor that dictates a need for change is the declining birthrate, especially in certain areas of Florida. The declining birthrate has made a decided impact on the elementary school enrollment, creating a surplus of elementary teachers. If this trend continues, pre-service education in Colleges of Education will have to sharply curtail their existing programs. Our society views the college degree with different eyes, and as a result colleges and universities are looking for new clientele. All of this rhetoric is merely to state the case: university faculty must become more involved with the school society they serve. Robert Hutchins states, "A contemporary scholar has no difficulty in saying that a university must be a service station for its community and at the same time an international organization." Therefore, it makes sense to have a more active involvement between the university faculty and the public school classroom.

It is from the direct involvement with the classroom teacher and students that relevance and creditability can be incorporated into any College of Education in-service program of the future.

Procedures

To demonstrate the changing needs of the school districts in the University of Central Florida service area, in-service directors in six districts conducted a needs assessment to determine the type of in-service programs most wanted by teachers. Their first priority was a

request for meaningful workshops on curricular innovations, particularly individualizing instruction.

The teachers wanted ideas not idealism, training not trivia, learning not lectures, and planning not platitudes. With this mandate from classroom teachers, the investigators began preparing instructional workshops which included strategies appropriate for and relevant to the classroom.

To develop strategies for implementing creative and relevant workshops, the following procedures evolved from fifty workshops which were conducted for over 1500 teachers in schools of four school districts in the Central Florida area (Brevard, Orange, Osceola, and Seminole):

Procedure 1. A readiness activity was given to the teachers to set the stage for the activities that would follow.

Procedure 2. A multi-media presentation of a "Little Boy" was shown. The underlying theme is a teacher stifles the creativity of a little boy by sterile, staid, stagnant teaching methods and environment.

Procedure 3. A discussion was conducted on how the workshop leader as an elementary classroom teacher humanized and individualized the instruction in an elementary classroom of low socio-economic students housed in an egg-crate room located in a community that was against any changes. By doing this, an atmosphere of creditability with the teachers was established so that a feeling of "Hey! She's been there" was generated which was important if teachers were going to tune in and not tune out.

Procedure 4. Self-awareness techniques were demonstrated to teachers to develop self-concept strategies for their students.

Procedure 5. Strategies from Sidney Simon (1972) Values Clarification were used, such as Values Voting, Twenty Things You Love To Do, and a Values Continuum. Glasser's (1969) classroom meeting concept was discussed to help teachers create a humane, non-threatening environment.

Procedure 6. A multi-media presentation of the Warm Fuzzies story and how it can be incorporated in the learning processes of children was shown to all teachers.

Procedure 7. The techniques of brainstorming were introduced as a means of teaching problem solving to students.

Procedure 8. An audio-visual presentation of a song by Ray Stevens "Everything is Beautiful" was shown to the group. This song lends itself to establishing a climate of a humanizing environment for all children.

Procedure 9. An audio-visual presentation by the workshop leader using examples of individualizing instruction through the use of learning centers. Pictures were made by the investigator in a myriad of classroom settings from egg-crate rooms to open expanses in buildings, from kindergarten to the sixth grade. The visuals included cartoons intended to instill in the viewer the idea of incorporating a humanizing atmosphere in their classrooms. Interspersed throughout are visuals of a "ditto dragon" (a cartoon character) which is a ditto machine that looks like a dragon, a dragon that devours the ambition of children doomed to work ditto sheets all day.

Procedure 10. A sample learning activity package was given to each participant designed to assist teachers in planning individual activities for their students.

Procedure 11. The teachers maneuver through and actually manipulate learning centers that were constructed by the investigator. As the teachers go through the centers the workshop leader demonstrates and explains the organizational structure of the centers, the management system, what happens at each center, the time required to experience each center, how materials were made, and the approximate cost of each center.

Results

Each subsequent workshop was improved through feedback from the previous workshop. This feedback was supplied from each district by means of an existing in-service evaluation form. These evaluation instruments provided salient data on the effectiveness of the workshops. The teachers' responses from each district were compiled, tallied, and are presented in the following tables.

Table I represented 15 workshops given in the Brevard School District with 475 teachers responding. The Brevard In-Service Instrument consisted of eight categories. The category rated highest was "the leader conducted this in-service with enthusiasm." The category that was rated lowest was "the physical facilities were appropriate for the activity."

The Osceola County In-Service Instrument in Table II portrays 275 teacher responses and 72% rated the workshops as very effective, and 25% effective, thereby illustrating that the majority of the teachers felt the workshops were able to meet their needs.

Table III, Seminole County In-Service Training Evaluations, exhibits the responses of 350 teachers from ten elementary schools. The workshops were given an overall "outstanding" rating of 98%.

The Orange County In-Service Evaluation Instrument (Table IV) represented the responses from 389 teachers. The workshops were held in thirteen elementary schools within the school district. The category receiving the highest rating (98%) was "evaluation of consultants/instructors."

Perhaps it would be difficult to assess the effectiveness of the workshops from the four in-service evaluations since they are dissimilar. There were 50 workshops given to 1500 teachers in four school districts where evaluations were made by the in-service representative. For Brevard teachers the workshops overall evaluations were 94% or "to a high degree." Orange County teachers gave a 98% excellent rating for the "overall evaluation of this activity." Seminole teachers responded with 96% above average, for rating the component or workshop overall. The Osceola teachers responded with 72%, "very effective."

The data substantiated the conclusion that of 1500 teachers in four school districts the workshops were rated high by 90% of participants, therefore, illustrating that the workshops were relevant and provided meaningful experiences for public school elementary classroom teachers.

TABLE I

BREVARD COUNTY SCHOOLS
 OPINION SURVEY OF IN-SERVICE PARTICIPANTS
 Selected Criteria

N = 475

X in the block following each criteria that best expresses how you feel about this staff development experience.	To a very high degree	To above average degree	To below average degree	Not applicable
1. The methods and/or media used to present this in-service were effective.	94%	6%	-	-
2. The objectives of this in-service were clarified and discussed.	91	9		
3. There was agreement between announced objectives and what actually took place.	88	12		
4. This in-service met my immediate and/or my long range needs.	91	9		
5. The physical facilities were appropriate for the activity	79	15	2	2
6. The leaders conducted this in-service with enthusiasm.	97	3		
7. The participants appeared to feel free to interact with the leaders or other participants.	94	6		
8. It was evident that there was planning and preparation for this in-service	97	3		

The highest possible rating is 4.0

TABLE II
OSCEOLA COUNTY
EVALUATION FOR IN-SERVICE WORKSHOP

Consultant: P. Manning

Component: Individualizing Instruction

N=275

5 Very Effective	4 Effective	3 Adequate	2 Ineffective	1 Very Ineffective
72%	25%	2%	1%	

Comments Below

What did you like about the workshops?

- Good ideas to use with my class.
- Consultant was very helpful and cooperative.
- Excellent - great senses of humor.
- Very effective.
- She gave us tangible examples on how to individualize. We need examples not lectures.
- Good materials - open discussion.
- Variety of materials and original ideas.
- Enjoyed both instructor and presentation.
- I found it to be one of the most helpful workshops I've attended.
- Instructor knew her subject - didn't waste time.
- Provided many "on hands" ideas for individualizing in the classroom.
- Attractive displays. She was a dynamic speaker. Open discussion.
- The "hands on" activities and great ideas!

Suggestions for Improvements.

- No improvements needed on this in-service workshop.
- More workshops like it for specific areas.
- I didn't like the seating arrangements.
- Longer in time.
- More time for browsing and feedback.
- Making some materials during workshop hours.

TABLE III

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF SEMINOLE COUNTY, FLORIDA
INSERVICE COMPONENT EVALUATION FORM

Component: Learning Centers Objective: Individualization

Instructor: Pat Manning Date: 1977-1980

Affiliation of Instructor: University of Central Florida

N = 350

OUTSTANDING	GOOD	FAIR	INADEQUATE	NOT APPLICABLE	COMPONENT DESIGN
89	4	7			Objectives stated in understandable terms
90	10				Appropriateness of objectives for improving job performance
93	7				Relevance of learning activities to objectives
92	6	2			Appropriateness of materials provided
90	9	1			Appropriateness of activities
92	8				Met the needs anticipated
					CONSULTANT OR WORKSHOP LEADER
92	7	1			Knowledge of the subject
91	8	1			Clarity of Presentation
90	9	1			Organization
89	6	5			Use of Time
92	8				Use of materials
95	5				Enthusiasm for the Subject
95	5				Ability to relate to the participants
90	8	2			Provision for feedback on participants' performance or progress during the component
98	2				Overall Effectiveness

TABLE III

(Continued)

IV. Additional comments:

1. One of the best things yet!
2. Let's do it again soon! The workshop time was so great for all of us and our kids.
3. Most worthwhile; would like to see some early dismissal days devoted to making more of these centers.
4. The presentation - excellent. I brought back many ideas for classroom use.
5. Extremely worthwhile.
6. Very informative; well prepared.
7. Liked the "hands-on" approach.
8. Love her "hands-on" approach, eagerness to help and consideration in letting teachers use her materials to copy.
9. Let's do it again soon! The workshop time was so great for all of us.

TABLE IV

ORANGE COUNTY IN-SERVICE EVALUATION

ACTIVITY TITLE Individualizing Instruction

COMPONENT # _____

DATE 1977-1980

PLEASE CHECK:

N = 389

POSITION

90%	01%	9%	
Instruc- tional	Non-instruc- tional	Adminis. Superv.	Other

LEVEL OF INSTRUCTION

100%			
Elem.	Second.	Adult	Other

EXPERIENCE

02%	10%	60%	28%
New 0 Yrs.	1-3 Yrs.	3-9 Yrs.	10 Yrs. Plus

DEGREE

	80%	17%	03%
H.S.	B.S. B.A.	M.S. M.A.	Masters Plus

Please rate the following items based on your participation

ACTIVITY ANALYSIS BASED ON PARTICIPATION	Excellent 5	High 4	Average 3	Low 2	Poor 1
I. How would you rate this activity overall?	90%	5%	5%		
II. How would you rate each of the following?					
A. Organization of the activity	91%	6%	3%		
B. Were activity objectives adequately defined?	96%	4%			
C. Were the objectives accomplished ?	93%	3%	3%	1%	
D. Pace of the Activity	98%	1%	1%		
E. Clarity of the presentation	96%	2%	1%	1%	
F. Interest level of the material presented	95%	1%	1%	3%	
G. Usefulness/Practicality of the presentation	92%	3%	3%	2%	
III. Evaluation of the consultant/ instructor(s)	98%	1%	1%		

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